

Message Text

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41

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20 NEA-10

OMB-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /141 W
----- 105883

O R 041435 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2296

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KAMPALA 1228

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US UG

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH GENERAL AMIN

REFS: (A) KAMPALA 1216; (B) STATE 061860 (C) KAMPALA 1226

SUMMARY. GENERAL AMIN HAS CLEARLY BEEN STUNG BY AWARENESS THAT HIS RELATIONS WITH USG HAVE DETERIORATED, EVIDENCED RECENTLY BY RECALL OF AMBASSADOR MELADY AND PHASE OUT OF AMERICAN ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL. IN WHAT FOR ME WAS NEW RECORD IN HIS STYLE OF IMPROVISED, SPUR- OF- THE- MOMENT DIPLOMACY, I WAS KEPT WAITING TO SEE HIM FOR SEVENTY MINUTES WHILE HE DRAFTED NEW, MORE CONCILIATORY TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT NIXON. AFTER SOME POLISHING OF GRAMMAR BY ETIANG AND TYPING UP BY SECRETARY HE PRESENTED COPY TO ME IN TEN- MINUTE TELEVISED CEREMONY. TEXT OF TELEGRAM ALREADY CABLED SEPTTEL. IN ADDITION TELEGRAM, AMIN' S ORAL REMARKS INDICATED HE WISHES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH USG. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH TYPICALLY SHORT NOTICE I WAS SUMMONED TO SEE PRESIDENT AMIN AT HIS MAKINDYE LODGE AT 2:30 TODAY. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ETIANG HAD INDICATED OVER PHONE THAT SUBJECT OF MEETING WOULD LIKELY BE REPORT WHICH HAS BEEN CIRCULATING CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT USG HAS QUIETLY WITHDRAWN AMB. MELADY BECAUSE OF

DISPLEASURE OVER SOME TELEGRAMS PRESIDENT AMIN SENT TO PRESIDENT NIXON. I ARRIVED ON TIME AND ETIANG ARRIVED FIVE MINUTES LATER. AFTER ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES GENERAL TELEPHONED TO ETIANG AND ASKED HIM TO JOIN HIM IN ANOTHER BUILDING ON GROUNDS. WHILE AWAITING AUDIENCE WITH AMIN FOR AN ADDITIONAL SEVENTY MINUTES, I HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO PREPARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS I ANTICIPATED ON STATUS AMB. MELADY AND USAID PROGRAM, AND I ALSO PREPARED DEMARCHE ON SUBJECT PALESTINIAN TERRORISM ALONG LINES STATE 045566.

2. ETIANG FINALLY REAPPEARED, APOLOGIZED FOR LONG WAIT BUT SAID IT WAS WORTH IT, FOR THERE HAD BEEN A VERY FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT IN US- UGANDAN RELATIONS WHICH GENERAL WOULD NOW COMMUNICATE TO ME. I JOINED GENERAL ON TERRACE GAZEBO, WITH FULL ARRAY OF TV CAMERAMEN AND JOURNALISTS PRESENT, PLUS UGANDA AIR FORCE OFFICER WHO WAS NOT INTRODUCED. AFTER EXCHANGE GREETINGS GENERAL HANDED ME COPY OF TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT NIXON (TEXT IN KAMPALA 1226) AND SUGGESTED I READ IT FIRST. I DID SO, THANKED HIM FOR COPY, AND ASKED IF IT HAD BEEN SENT. GENERAL REPLIED IT HAD ALREADY GONE BUT SUGGESTED I SEND IT ALSO, AS IT MIGHT GET THERE FASTER THROUGH OUR CHANNELS (HIS LAST TELEGRAM APPARENTLY NEVER DID ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON).

3. GENERAL THEN STATED THAT HE BELIEVES IN TELLING TRUTH TO FRIENDS, WHICH IS WHY HE LIKES FRANKNESS. HE GENUINELY WELCOMES CEASE FIRE IN VIETNAM. HE CONTINUED THAT HE WISHES TO HAVE VERY GOOD RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES, WISHES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. UGANDA WANTS TO BE FRIENDS WITH ALL COUNTRIES. WHAT HE HAS BEEN DOING SINCE HE TOOK OVER GOVERNMENT IS STRICTLY INTERNAL MATTER AND NOT DIRECTED AGAINST ANY COUNTRY. HE EVEN LIKES BRITISH, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS NOT COMPLETELY (NOT IN EVERYTHING THEY DO WAS SENSE OF THIS REMARK). WE COULD BE ASSURED THAT HE PLANNED TO COMPENSATE FOR ALL TAKEN- OVER FIRMS, WHETHER BRITISH, NON- CITIZEN ASIAN, ISRAELI OR OTHER. GENERAL SAID HE HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED VISIT FROM SOME NICE AMERICAN PEOPLE WHO HAD MADE HIM LIFE MEMBER OF THEIR ORGANIZATION, CORE. AT THIS POINT HE GAVE ME TYPED COPY OF CITATION ON HIS CORE MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE, WHICH IS " IN APPRECIATION OF HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICES TO THE AFRICAN PEOPLE OF THE WORLD." FINALLY GENERAL STATED
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THAT HE CONGRATULATED PRESIDENT NIXON ON HIS RE- ELECTION AS CHIEF OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES AND REITERATED HIS WISH FOR BEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES.

4. I LIMITED MY RESPONSE TO THANKING HIM FOR RECEIVING ME, FOR COPY OF TELEGRAM AND FOR HIS REMARKS REGARDING GOOD RELATIONS. THIS DID NOT APPEAR TO BE APPROPRIATE OCCASION TO BRING UP TERRORISM QUESTION, AND IN ANY CASE AMIN ROSE TO

TERMINATE INTERVIEW AFTER ABOUT TEN MINUTES, INDICATING HE PREFERRED LIMIT SCENARIO TO HIS NEW TELEGRAM AND SENTIMENTS IT EXPRESSED.

5. WHEN I RETURNED TO CHANCERY I RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM ETIANG, WHO SAID HE WISHED TO ELABORATE TWO POINTS ABOUT TELEGRAM. FIRST WAS THAT BASIC DRAFT HAD BEEN PREPARED BY GENERAL HIMSELF, IN HIS OWN WORDS, AND HE (ETIANG) HAD POLISHED GRAMMAR AND HAD IT TYPED WHILE I WAS WAITING TO SEE GENERAL. IN OTHER WORDS, IT EXPRESSES HIS OWN SENTIMENTS AND WAS NOT SOMETHING HANDED TO HIM TO APPROVE. SECONDLY, ETIANG STATED, SO FAR AS HE KNEW THIS WAS FIRST PUBLIC DECLARATION THAT THERE WOULD BE COMPENSATION FOR ISRAELI FIRMS, BOTH IN THE TELEGRAM AND IN AMIN' S ORAL REMARKS.

6. COMMENT: IT IS STRONGLY CHARACTERISTIC OF GENERAL AMIN THAT HE DOES NOT LIKE TO HEAR BAD NEWS AND LIKES EVEN LESS TO PUBLICIZE ANYTHING THAT MIGHT TEND TO REFLECT ON HIS PERFORMANCE. HE ALSO CONTINUALLY STRESSES HIS WISH TO BE FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE IN WORLD AND TO HAVE EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES. MY GUESS WOULD BE THAT HE DECIDED HE DID NOT WANT TO ASK ABOUT STATUS OF AMBASSADOR MELADY FOR FEAR THAT ANSWER HE MIGHT RECEIVE WOULD INDICATE SOMETHING CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN GOOD RELATIONS WITH USG. INSTEAD, IN HIS OWN RATHER SHREWD WAY, PERHAPS WITH PRODDING FROM ETIANG, HE HAS DECIDED TO TRY NEW TACK OF REVERSING BAD IMPRESSION HE CREATED WITH HIS LAST TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT NIXON ON VIETNAM, SENT ON OCCASION OF SIGNATURE OF CEASE FIRE AGREEMENT. GENERAL IS ALSO DOUBTLESS DISTURBED BY EVIDENCE THAT USG IS PULLING OUT USAID PERSONNEL AND HOPES HIS WORDS OF FRIENDSHIP WILL HALT OR REVERSE THAT MOVEMENT. HE MAY ALSO-- AND THIS IS ONLY SPECULATION-- HAVE SOME CONCERN THAT USG MIGHT INTERFERE IN SOME WAY WITH MASSIVE ASSISTANCE HE HOPES TO OBTAIN FROM BLACK AMERICANS. CORE HAS PROMISED TO RECRUIT, PERHAPS NOT REALIZING THAT USG TAKES HANDS- OFF ATTITUDE TOWARD PRIVATE ASSISTANCE EFFORTS.

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7. IT IS OF COURSE UP TO DEPARTMENT AND WHITE HOUSE TO DECIDE HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS LATEST MESSAGE FROM AMIN, BUT BELIEVE THERE OUGHT TO BE SOME RESPONSE, EVEN IF ONLY ORAL, FOR IT WOULD NOT HELP OUR GENERAL SITUATION TO BE ENTIRELY UNRESPONSIVE TO HIS EFFORT TO PATCH THINGS UP A BIT. AT SAME TIME BELIEVE AMIN IS ONE OF THOSE CASES WHERE IF ONE HAS HIM AS A " BEST FRIEND" ONE DOES NOT NEED AN ENEMY.

8. WE MAY HAVE SOME FURTHER SUGGESTIONS AFTER TIME FOR REFLECTION ON THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT.

KEELEY

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